

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS



Department of Agricultural Resources

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TO: Municipal Chief Executive Officers and Boards of Health

FROM: Taryn LaScola, Director, Division of Crop and Pest Services

REGARDING: MDAR Apiary Program

DATE: February 8, 2018

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources ("Department") Division of Crop and Pest Services manages the state Apiary Program ("Program"). The Program promotes and sustains apiculture in the Commonwealth by providing support to honey beekeepers, pesticide applicators, farmers, land managers, educators, regulators and government officials. The Program is comprised of a team of highly trained and knowledgeable staff consisting of a Chief Inspector and full-time seasonal inspectors located throughout the state. In addition, the Program is also charged with carrying out and enforcing the apiary laws and regulations found at M.G.L.c. 128 sections 32-38 and 330 CMR 8.00.

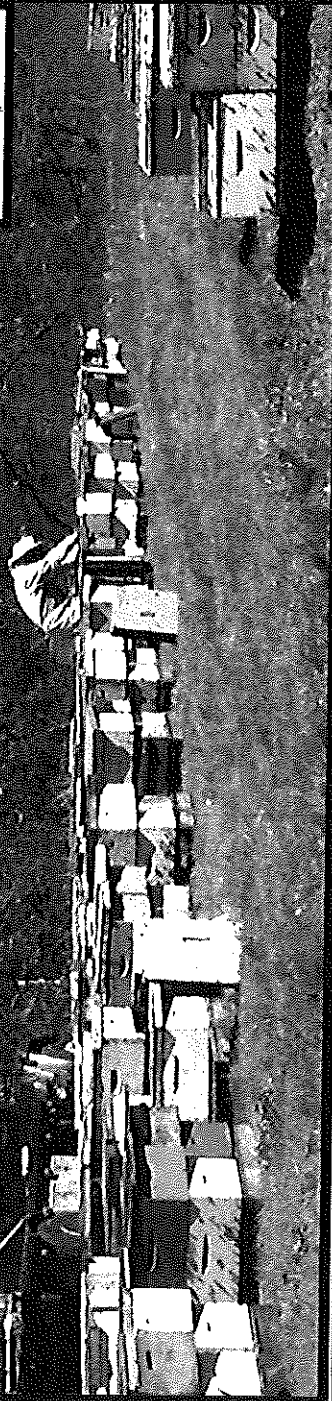
Due to the increased popularity of honey beekeeping and the rising number of beekeepers, the Department would like to inform municipalities that it is available to offer guidance and assistance in the following ways:

- Educational outreach to town officials
- Information on honey bee biology
- Information on existing state laws and regulations
- Information on best management practices for honey beekeeping
- Information on the Apiary Program's services
- Providing the Massachusetts Pollinator Protection Plan

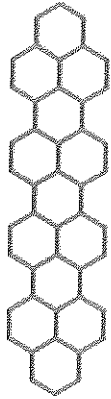
Honey bee health in the country and in Massachusetts is in decline, represented most noticeably by the high annual losses of colonies. A vast majority of agriculture in the Commonwealth and our local food supply relies on honey bees for pollination. The Department supports the efforts of commercial and hobby honey beekeeping within the Commonwealth. The Department also understands that residents and municipalities often have questions and concerns about honey beekeeping activities. Given this, the Department is available to provide municipal government support and assistance.

Please review the attached Apiary Program brochure and also visit our website for additional information: <https://www.mass.gov/apiary-program-honey-bees>. If questions or concerns arise, please contact the Department for additional support.

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“Ensuring the health of honey bees in the Commonwealth”



MDAR’s Apiary Program has been established to promote and sustain apiculture in the Commonwealth by providing support to honey beekeepers, pesticide applicators, farmers, land managers, educators, students, regulators, academia, government officials and the public. The Program is comprised of a team of highly trained and knowledgeable staff consisting of a Chief Apiary Inspector and full-time Seasonal Inspectors located throughout the state to service the needs of stakeholders and their honey bees.

Inspectors Perform the Following Services:

- ❖ Inspect, sample and monitor honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) and hive equipment for pest, parasites and pathogens.
- ❖ Register apiaries and colonies for beekeepers.
- ❖ Prevent establishment of new pests, parasites, pathogens, and Africanized honey bees (*Apis mellifera scutellata*) through imported bees and hive equipment.
- ❖ Investigate suspected honey bee kills from pesticides and pathogen spillover from American Foulbrood (*Paenibacillus larvae*).
- ❖ Provide technical assistance, continuing education, and outreach to all audiences on topics related to honey bee biology, health, colony management, and pollination.
- ❖ Issue permits for interstate movement of honey bees and hive equipment.
- ❖ Promote honey beekeepers and the local beekeeping industry through marketing of Massachusetts-produced honey and hive products.
- ❖ Communicate with local, regional and national audiences to stay current on trends in honey bee health, management techniques and treatment options.

FAQ

How many honey beekeepers and hives do we have in MA?
There is a large and diverse beekeeping population as current estimates indicate that we have 4-4,500 active beekeepers managing 40-45,000 hives.

How many MA crops rely on honey bees for pollination?
Over 45% of MA agricultural commodities rely on honey bees for crop pollination.

How do I request a hive inspection?

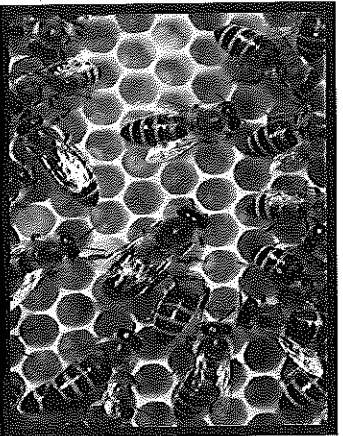
Submit a completed Inspection Request form online to MDAR: <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/farm-products/apiary/mdar-apiary-inspection-request-form.html>

Who should I contact if I suspect my honey bees were killed by pesticides?

Contact the Chief Apiary Inspector immediately so that the issue can be promptly investigated.

Who should I contact if I found a nest of honey bees?

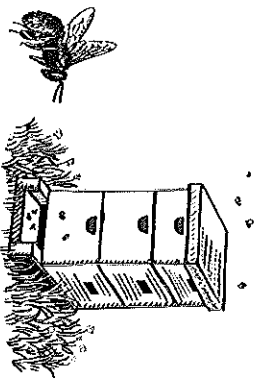
Contact your local county bee association to find a list of beekeepers in your area to remove the bees.



Come Visit A State Apiary!

Are you interested in learning more about honey bees?

If so, join the Apiary Program team for a *Hive Dive* educational program featuring a tour of a live working colony and discussions with bee experts at one of MDAR's two State Apiary locations: Amherst, MA and Danvers, MA. Visit the Apiary Program website to get more information about where the programs are held: <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agency/agr/farm-products/apiary/>



Get Listed as a Local Honey Producer!

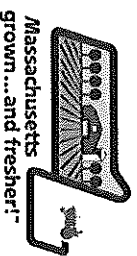
Want to purchase local honey?

Visit the MassGrown map to search your area and find a list of local beekeepers that produce and sell honey:

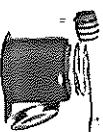
<http://www.mass.gov/agr/massgrow/honey.htm>

Are you a MA beekeeper that produces and sells honey to the public? If so, get listed as a honey producer for free on the MassGrown map:

www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/markets/1-mktg-farm-survey.doc



Massachusetts grown... and fresher!



Contact Us:

Apiary Program

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Apiary Program

